

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
ROUTING SLIP

File

TO:

| | ACTION | INFO | DATE | INITIAL |
|--------------|--------|------|-------------|---------|
| 1 DCI | | X | 19 MAR 1984 | |
| 2 DDCI | | X | | |
| 3 EXDIR | | X | | |
| 4 D/ICS | | X | | |
| 5 DDI | | X | | |
| 6 DDA | | X | | |
| 7 DDO | | X | | |
| 8 DDS&T | | X | | |
| 9 Chm/NIC | | | | |
| 10 GC | | | | |
| 11 IG | | | | |
| 12 Compt | | | | |
| 13 D/EEO | | | | |
| 14 D/Pers | | | | |
| 15 D/OLL | | X | | |
| 16 C/PAO | | | | |
| 17 SA/IA | | | | |
| 18 AO/DCI | | | | |
| 19 C/IPD/OIS | | | | |
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SUSPENSE _____
Date _____

Remarks

[Signature]
Executive Secretary
16 March 1984
Date

FRANK R. WOLF
10TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 13, 1984

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ON CHILDREN, YOUTH
AND FAMILIES

AH. →

Mr. William J. Casey
Director of Central Intelligence
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Mr. Casey:

Thank you for your response to my letter on
the proposal of secure video conferencing
between the United States and the Soviet Union.

I appreciate your comments. They will
greatly help to guide me as I consider
legislation on this sensitive issue.

Again thank you for taking the time to
respond.

Sincerely,

Frank R. Wolf
Member of Congress

DCI
EXEC
REG

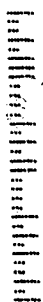
House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Frank R. Wolf
M.C.

Mr. William J. Casey
Director of Central Intelligence Agency
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505



Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

OLL 84-0162/8

6 MAR 1984

AH. OLL 84-0162/2
ER 84-153

The Honorable Frank R. Wolf
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Frank:

As promised in my 24 January 1984 letter to you, we have reviewed with interest your proposal for upgrading the present communications capability between the Governments of the United States and the Soviet Union. Based on the Secretary of Defense 11 April 1983 report to the Congress on the Direct Communications Link (DCL) and Other Measures to Enhance Stability, there is already an effort under way within the Government to develop ways of improving the existing Hotline between Washington and Moscow. Your concern that the existing Hotline may not be sufficient during times of crisis is shared by others, and several options are being explored to improve the situation.

The existing Hotline uses mutually agreed upon equipment to provide an encrypted teletype link. While the equipment to provide video teleconferencing is available, the cryptographic equipment required to protect the video transmissions could involve the transfer of sensitive technology. We would likely be unwilling to share our best technology with the Soviets and we can predict that they would have similar concerns.

The present Hotline arrangement requires that dual communications paths be used to ensure continuous communications. Both Intelsat and Soviet Molnya satellite systems are used. We understand the weakest link in the present system is the ground paths from the satellite terminals to the end user in Moscow. If existing facilities are used, they may not be able to support the increased data rates required for the encryption of video. The technical problems notwithstanding, such a secure video teleconferencing link as you propose is expensive, but feasible.

C-209



In addressing the specific issues you raised in your 6 January 1984 letter, we would like to offer the following:

a. The benefit of face to face contact during a crisis is believed to be dependent upon the personalities and issues involved. The subject of direct contact between the Heads of State was discussed at length by a group reviewing the Secretary of Defense's proposals on upgrading the Hotline. It was the general view that during a crisis, there may be compelling pressure to respond without adequate reflection, and with the language barrier, there is the potential for misinterpretation.

b. The ability to transmit documents, maps and photographs via encrypted video would be valuable. This option is being considered for the DCL upgrade, and we believe this is the only proposal being received favorably at this time by the Soviet Union.

c. Although the Soviets have conceded the need to improve the Hotline and have been responsive in bilateral discussions on the subject, we do not believe that Moscow is ready to agree to a video component. The Soviets are likely to find such an improvement as too intrusive, and if so, this could detract from the discussion on other essential improvements.

d. A significant enhancement to today's capability between Washington and Moscow would be to upgrade our diplomatic channels by providing for a satellite capability at the respective embassies in Washington and Moscow. The present system uses primarily leased commercial circuitry which can be disrupted for any number of reasons, including intentional. Each Government has the capability of providing dedicated satellite communications to its embassies which would assure that during a crisis the necessary diplomatic and intelligence information would be available to both Governments. This would allow both Governments to transmit via diplomatic channels documents, photographs and charts utilizing facsimile equipment. The primary issue here is one of reciprocity, and the Department of State has been pursuing this upgrade.

We appreciate the opportunity you have given us to present our observations on your proposal to upgrade the existing Hotline between Washington and Moscow. We would be pleased to answer any further questions you might have as a result of your investigations into the possibilities of video teleconferencing on the DCL.

Sincerely,

/s/ Bill

William J. Casey
Director of Central Intelligence

Distribution:

Original - Addressee

- 1 - DCI
- 1 - DDCI
- 1 - EXDIR
- 1 - ER (84-153)
- 1 - D/ICS
- 1 - DDI
- 1 - DDA
- 1 - DDO
- 1 - DDS&T
- 1 - DC/OC/DDA
- 1 - [redacted] C/PATG/ORD/DDS&T
- 1 - [redacted] D/SOVA/DDI
- 1 - D/OLL
- 1 - DD/OLL
- 1 - OLL Record
- 1 - OLL Chrono

LD/OLL [redacted] (28 February 1984)

STAT

STAT

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

24 JAN 1984

OLL: 84-0162/2

AH. ER 84-153

Honorable Frank R. Wolf
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Wolf:

Thank you very much for your letter of 6 January in which you inform me that you are considering introducing legislation to establish a video conferencing capability between the United States and the USSR.

Your proposal is indeed innovative and intriguing and should certainly be carefully studied. The technical people in the Agency have some preliminary thoughts on possible problems with the proposal and what could be done to overcome these. I have also tasked our intelligence analysis people to think about some of the questions you raised in your letter. When these thoughts have been put together, I will have Clair George, my Director of the Office of Legislative Liaison, get in touch with you so that we can brief you or try to answer some further questions.

Some of the issues you raise in your letter should definitely be addressed by the State Department. I am pleased to note that you have been in touch with them as well.

Sincerely,

/s/ William J. Casey

William J. Casey
Director of Central Intelligence

Distribution:

Original - Addressee

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|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 - DDCI | 1 - DDA |
| 1 - EXDIR | 1 - DDO |
| ① - ER (ER: 84-153) | 1 - DDS&T |
| 1 - D/OLL | 1 - C/LD/OLL |
| 1 - DD/OLL | 1 - OLL Subject |
| 1 - D/ICS | 1 - OLL Chrono |
| 1 - DDI | DD/OLL:EM:mjg (19 Jan 84) |



EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

ROUTING SLIP

| TO: | | ACTION | INFO | DATE | INITIAL |
|-----|-----------|--------|------------|------|---------|
| 1 | DCI | | X | | |
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| 6 | DDA | | X | | |
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| 10 | GC | | | | |
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| | SUSPENSE | | 20 January | | |

Remarks

Please prepare reply for DCI's signature.

JS
Executive Secretary

11 January 1984

Date

3637 (10-81)

FRANK R. WOLF
1ST DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

January 6, 1984

The Honorable William J. Casey
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

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Executive Registry

64-153

Dear Director Casey: **BH**

I am considering introducing legislation to propose that a secure video conferencing capability be established between the governments of the United States and the Soviet Union, in the belief that more direct, face-to-face communication at the appropriate levels could contribute to improving our relationship, and might help to forestall or defuse potential crises. I am seeking advice and ideas from persons such as yourself who have had personal experience in negotiations and other relevant direct contact with Soviet officials.

In researching this matter, one possibility which has surfaced would be to augment the present Direct Communications Link (Hotline) with a teleconference system, designed for the exclusive use of the heads of state in times of emergency. I believe such a system could provide a vehicle by which the persuasive powers and sincerity of a U.S. president could be advantageously used--perhaps to critical advantage--during times of crises.

Technology is available to implement such a system which, in addition to providing face-to-face contact between heads of state, could: permit the users to use only part of the system at one time, i.e. the visual contact could be turned off until it is needed; allow any communication to be delayed by adjustable time increments to allow for editing of remarks; transmit either written translations of the spoken word or voices that have been scrambled to remove traces of emotion; permit the users to rapidly transmit and receive maps, photographs, and other prepared material either on screens or as hard copy; and use computer stored information, including maps and photographs, in transmissions. I have been assured that secure transmission is possible and that the transfer of sensitive technology to the Soviet Union would be minimal.

In my consideration of a legislative initiative, I would appreciate your comments on the following issues:

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REG

C-209
XF L-272

The Honorable William J. Casey

page 2

January 6, 1984

1) Would face-to-face contact between the two heads of state using a video system significantly contribute to the resolution of a crisis? Or would the benefits of such a capability be outweighed by the potential dangers of misstatement, misinterpretation, or misunderstanding?

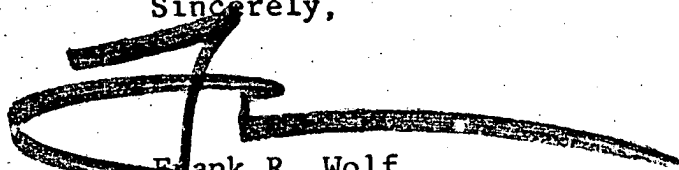
2) If you find merit in such a system, would you recommend that it augment the existing Direct Communications Link?

3) Would such a video conferencing capability have merit at other levels of government or for other purposes beyond crisis management, such as information sharing to promote understanding in cultural, scientific, military areas?

4) Finally, are there any other measures to improve communication with the Soviet government which should be explored as part of an effort to reduce tensions and build confidence?

Thank you for taking the time to express your opinions on this issue. I value your comments based on your personal experience in dealing with the Soviet government. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,



Frank R. Wolf
Member of Congress

FRW/tmf

THANK YOU